

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method of operating a base station comprising:
 - 2 Receiving a request for a channel of a plurality of channels on a first channel of
 - 3 the plurality of channels;
 - 4 Determining whether a channel of the plurality of channels is available; and
 - 5 Communicating to the requestor whether a channel of the plurality of channels is
 - 6 available.

 - 1 · 2. The method of claim 1 wherein:
 - 2 Communicating includes denying the request for a channel.

 - 1 · 3. The method of claim 1 wherein:
 - 2 Communicating includes granting the request for a channel by assigning the first
 - 3 channel.

 - 1 · 4. The method of claim 1 wherein:
 - 2 Communicating includes granting the request for a channel by assigning a
 - 3 second channel and the first channel.

1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein:
2 Communicating includes granting the request for a channel by assigning a
3 second channel instead of the first channel.

1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein:
2 Determining includes evaluating a load of the system.

1 7. The method of claim 1 wherein:
2 Determining includes evaluating an emergency status of the request.

052326-10000
1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein:
2 Determining includes evaluating a status of a subscriber from whom the request
3 originates.

1 9. The method of claim 8 wherein:
2 Evaluating the status includes evaluating the subscription terms of the
3 subscriber.

1 10. The method of claim 8 wherein:
2 Evaluating the status includes evaluating the payment history of the subscriber.

1 11. The method of claim 1 wherein:
2 Determining includes evaluating a nature of the request.

1 12. The method of claim 11 wherein:
2 The nature of the request includes a high bandwidth requirement.

1 13. The method of claim 11 wherein:
2 The nature of the request includes a low bandwidth requirement.

1 14. The method of claim 11 wherein:
2 The nature of the request includes a set of capabilities of equipment used to
3 make the request.

1 15. The method of claim 3 further comprising:
2 Receiving a request for a third channel of the plurality of channels upon
3 assigning of the first channel;
4 Determining whether a third or fourth channel of the plurality of channels is
5 available; and
6 Communicating to the requestor the third channel availability or fourth channel
7 availability.

- 1 16. A method of operating a user terminal comprising:
- 2 Sending a request for a first channel of a plurality of channels on the first
- 3 channel; and
- 4 Receiving an indication of availability of a channel of the plurality of channels.
- 1 17. The method of claim 16 wherein:
- 2 The request including a subscriber identification.
- 1 18. The method of claim 16 wherein:
- 2 The request including an emergency code.
- 1 19. The method of claim 16 wherein:
- 2 The request including an equipment identification.
- 1 20. The method of claim 16 wherein:
- 2 The request including a training sequence.
- 1 21. The method of claim 16 wherein:
- 2 The indication signaling no channel is available.
- 1 22. The method of claim 16 wherein:
- 2 The indication signaling the first channel is available.

- 1 23. The method of claim 16 wherein:
2 The indication signaling a second channel of the plurality of channels is
3 available.
- 1 24. The method of claim 23 wherein:
2 The indication signaling the first channel is also available.
- 1 25. The method of claim 22 further comprising:
2 Communicating using the first channel.
- 1 26. The method of claim 23 further comprising:
2 Communicating using the second channel.
- 1 27. The method of claim 24 further comprising:
2 Communicating using the first channel and the second channel.
- 1 28. The method of claim 25 further comprising:
2 Sending a request for a third channel of the plurality of channels; and
3 Receiving an indication of availability of a channel of the plurality of channels.
- 1 29. The method of claim 28 wherein:
2 The indication signaling the third channel is not available.

1 30. The method of claim 28 wherein:
2 The indication signaling the third channel is available.

1 31. The method of claim 28 wherein:
2 The indication signaling a fourth channel is available.

1 32. The method of claim 21 further comprising:
2 Waiting an inter-channel delay;
3 Sending a request for a third channel of the plurality of channels on the third
4 channel;
5 Receiving an indication of availability of a channel of the plurality of channels.

1 33. The method of claim 32 wherein:
2 the indication signaling the third channel is not available;
3 determining no other channels may be requested;
4 waiting an inter-attempt delay; and
5 sending a request for the first channel on the first channel.

1 34. A method of providing access to a network comprising:
2 receiving a request for access on a first channel of a plurality of channels at
3 random from a network subscriber, each channel of the plurality of channels suitable for
4 accessing the network; and
5 granting access to the network on a channel of the plurality of channels based
6 on an evaluation of factors.

1 35. The method of claim 34 wherein:
2 The factors include subscriber status, subscriber equipment, network loading,
3 type of service requested, geographic location of the request, geographic location of the
4 responding equipment, connection quality, usage history of the subscriber, and
5 emergency status of the request.

1 36. A method of accessing a network comprising:
2 requesting access to the network on a first channel of a plurality of channels,
3 each channel of the plurality of channels suitable for accessing the network; and
4 receiving access to the network on a channel of the plurality of channels based
5 on an evaluation of factors.

1 37. The method of claim 36 wherein:
2 The factors include subscriber status, subscriber equipment, network loading,
3 and emergency status of the request.

1 38. The method of claim 36 wherein:

2 The request includes information related to equipment used by a subscriber
3 making the request.

1 39. The method of claim 8 wherein:

2 Evaluating the status includes evaluating the usage history of the subscriber.

1 40. The method of claim 1 wherein:

2 Determining includes evaluating the radio frequency characteristics of the
3 request.

1 41. A method comprising:

2 Receiving a request for a channel of a plurality of channels on a first channel of
3 the plurality of channels;
4 Determining whether a channel of the plurality of channels is available; and
5 Communicating to the requestor whether a channel of the plurality of channels is
6 available.

1 42. The method of claim 41 wherein:

2 Communicating includes denying the request for a channel.

1 43. The method of claim 41 wherein:

2 Communicating includes granting the request for a channel by assigning the first
3 channel.

1 44. The method of claim 41 wherein:

2 Communicating includes granting the request for a channel by assigning a
3 second channel and the first channel.

1 45. The method of claim 41 wherein:

2 Communicating includes granting the request for a channel by assigning a
3 second channel instead of the first channel.

1 46. The method of claim 41 wherein:

2 Determining includes evaluating a load of the system.

1 47. The method of claim 41 wherein:

2 Determining includes evaluating an emergency status of the request.

1 48. The method of claim 41 wherein:

2 Determining includes evaluating a status of a subscriber from whom the request
3 originates.

1 49. The method of claim 48 wherein:

2 Evaluating the status includes evaluating the subscription terms of the
3 subscriber.

1 50. The method of claim 48 wherein:

2 Evaluating the status includes evaluating the payment history of the subscriber.

1 51. The method of claim 41 wherein:

2 Determining includes evaluating a nature of the request.

1 52. The method of claim 51 wherein:

2 The nature of the request includes a high bandwidth requirement.

1 53. The method of claim 51 wherein:

2 The nature of the request includes a low bandwidth requirement.

1 54. The method of claim 51 wherein:

2 The nature of the request includes a set of capabilities of equipment used to
3 make the request.

1 55. The method of claim 43 further comprising:

2 Receiving a request for a third channel of the plurality of channels upon
3 assigning of the first channel;

4 Determining whether a third or fourth channel of the plurality of channels is
5 available; and
6 Communicating to the requestor the third channel availability or fourth channel
7 availability.

1 56. The method of claim 48 wherein:
2 Evaluating the status includes evaluating the usage history of the subscriber.

1 57. The method of claim 41 wherein:
2 Determining includes evaluating the radio frequency characteristics of the
3 request.

1 58. The method of claim 41 wherein:
2 Communicating includes at least one of: denying the request for a channel,
3 granting the request for a channel by assigning the first channel, granting the request
4 for a channel by assigning a second channel and the first channel, or granting the
5 request for a channel by assigning a second channel instead of the first channel.

1 59. The method of claim 41 wherein:

2 Determining includes at least one of: evaluating the radio frequency
3 characteristics of the request, evaluating a load of the system, evaluating an emergency
4 status of the request, evaluating a status of a subscriber from whom the request
5 originates, or evaluating a nature of the request.

1 60. An apparatus comprising:

2 means for receiving a request for a channel of a plurality of channels on a first
3 channel of the plurality of channels;

4 means for determining whether a channel of the plurality of channels is available;

5 and

6 means for communicating to the requestor whether a channel of the plurality of
7 channels is available.

1 61. The apparatus of claim 60 wherein:

2 the means for communicating includes a means for assigning a channel of the
3 plurality of channels.

1 62. The apparatus of claim 60 wherein:
2 the means for determining includes a means for evaluating a status of a network,
3 a means for evaluating a status of a request, a means for evaluating a status of a
4 subscriber, a means for evaluating a usage history of a subscriber and a means for
5 evaluating a radio frequency characteristic of a request.

1 63. A system comprising:
2 a processor; and
3 a network interface coupled to the processor;
4 wherein the processor and the network interface are collectively configured to:
5 receive a request for a channel of a plurality of channels on a first channel of the
6 plurality of channels;
7 determine whether a channel of the plurality of channels is available; and
8 communicate to the requestor whether a channel of the plurality of channels is
9 available.

1 64. A machine-readable medium embodying instructions, the instructions, when
2 executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a method, the method
3 comprising:
4 Receiving a request for a channel of a plurality of channels on a first channel of
5 the plurality of channels;
6 Determining whether a channel of the plurality of channels is available; and

7 Communicating to the requestor whether a channel of the plurality of channels is
8 available.

1 65. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Communicating includes denying the request for a channel.

1 66. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Communicating includes granting the request for a channel by assigning the first
5 channel.

1 67. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Communicating includes granting the request for a channel by assigning a
5 second channel and the first channel.

1 68. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Communicating includes granting the request for a channel by assigning a
5 second channel instead of the first channel.

1 69. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Determining includes evaluating a load of the system.

1 70. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Determining includes evaluating an emergency status of the request.

1 71. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Determining includes evaluating a status of a subscriber from whom the request
5 originates.

1 72. The machine-readable medium of claim 71 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Evaluating the status includes evaluating the subscription terms of the
5 subscriber.

1 73. The machine-readable medium of claim 71 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Evaluating the status includes evaluating the payment history of the subscriber.

1 74. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,

2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Determining includes evaluating a nature of the request.

1 75. The machine-readable medium of claim 74 further embodying instructions,

2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 The nature of the request includes a high bandwidth requirement.

1 76. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 The nature of the request includes a low bandwidth requirement.

1 77. The machine-readable medium of claim 74 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 The nature of the request includes a set of capabilities of equipment used to
5 make the request.

1 78. The machine-readable medium of claim 66 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Receiving a request for a third channel of the plurality of channels upon
5 assigning of the first channel;

6 Determining whether a third or fourth channel of the plurality of channels is
7 available; and

8 Communicating to the requestor the third channel availability or fourth channel
9 availability.

1 79. The machine-readable medium of claim 71 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Evaluating the status includes evaluating the usage history of the subscriber.

1 80. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Determining includes evaluating the radio frequency characteristics of the
5 request.

1 81. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Communicating includes at least one of: denying the request for a channel,
5 granting the request for a channel by assigning the first channel, granting the request
6 for a channel by assigning a second channel and the first channel, or granting the
7 request for a channel by assigning a second channel instead of the first channel.

1 82. The machine-readable medium of claim 64 further embodying instructions,
2 the instructions, when executed by a processor, causing the processor to perform a
3 method, wherein:

4 Determining includes at least one of: evaluating the radio frequency
5 characteristics of the request, evaluating a load of the system, evaluating an emergency
6 status of the request, evaluating a status of a subscriber from whom the request
7 originates, or evaluating a nature of the request.

1 83. The method of claim 41 wherein:
2 the request implies a request for any channel of the plurality of channels.

1 84. The method of claim 41 wherein:
2 the request implies a request for the first channel of the plurality of channels.

1 85. The method of claim 41 wherein:
2 the request encodes a desired channel of the plurality of channels.